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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the relationship between pedagogy and subject matter specifically in the context of the instructional planning provided by two alternative route programs. Instructional planning can be and often is taught to teacher candidates as a generic skill, yet in practice it must necessarily occur in the context of a subject. The paper describes four examples of lessons teacher candidates received in instructional planning. Two of these occurred in the context of a curriculum. The first portrayed instructional planning as a matter of choosing instructional goals. The second portrayed instructional planning as a matter of arranging required subject matter into the available calendar spaces. The other two examples were removed from any curriculum context. The first of these focused on a well-organized sequence for instruction, with the focus on packaging and presenting each day's subject matter. The second portrayed instructional planning as a process that existed independent of subject matter. A discussion is presented on the implications of such lessons for subject matter content. (JD)

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Mary M. Kennedy

NCRTE

National
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Mary M. Kennedy

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Abstract

This paper examines the relationship between pedagogy and subject matter specifically in the context of instructional planning. Instructional planning can be and often is taught to teacher candidates as a generic skill, yet it must necessarily occur in practice in the context of a subject. The paper describes four examples of lessons teacher candidates received in instructional planning, two of which occur in the context of a curriculum and two of which are removed from any curriculum context. It then discusses the implications of such lessons for helping teachers learn to plan for instruction.

GENERIC AND CURRICULUM-SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONAL PLANNING IN ALTERNATIVE ROUTES TO CERTIFICATION

Mary M. Kennedy[1]

Instructional planning is generally presented to teachers as a generic teaching skill, one that applies equally well to all subjects and to all kinds of learning within each subject. Yet, though it is taught to teachers outside the context of any subject, real instructional planning must necessarily be done within the context of a subject: It involves deciding what to teach, in what sequence to introduce new ideas, and how to assess student progress in learning particular ideas. It also involves estimating how difficult certain concepts will be for their students and designing learning activities that are especially suited to particular content.

One way to think about instructional planning is to assume that these decisions about curriculum follow automatically from the subject itself, that each piece of content carries with it a pedagogical imperative (Jackson, 1986)--a self-evident way in which it should to taught to others. If this is true, then teacher educators would not need to address questions of what is most important to teach, why, or in what order things should be taught. Instead, they can assume that candidates who have studied the subject already have learned what is important about it, in what sequence new ideas should be introduced, and what should be emphasized when teaching particular topics. All they need to learn from teacher educators is how to package their already-chosen subject matter.

Another way to think about instructional planning is represented in those who advocate subject-specific pedagogy. Shulman and others (Shulman, 1986, 1987; Wilson, Shulman, and Richert, 1985) use the term pedagogical subject-matter knowledge to refer to the unique ways of understanding a subject that enable teachers to talk about it, portray it and make it relevant to students. Pedagogical subject matter knowledge includes subject-specific instructional planning, for teachers use their special understanding of the subject to make important decisions about what is most important, how to assure that students grasp the most important ideas, and in what sequence to introduce these ideas.

Most teacher education programs take a generic approach to instructional planning. In fact, they take a generic approach to most aspects of pedagogy, in part because pedagogy and subject matter are the responsibility of separate university departments. But instructional planning in particular must be taught generically for an additional reason: without knowing which school districts will employ their candidates, teacher educators cannot know what particular content teachers will be expected to teach, for district curricula can vary considerably.

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[1]Mary M. Kennedy, professor of teacher education at Michigan State University, is director of the National Center for Research on Teacher Education.

Alternative routes into teaching, on the other hand, are sometimes offered by school districts, rather than universities, and these district-based teacher education programs provide an opportunity to teach pedagogical practices such as instructional planning within the context of a specific curriculum. Though alternative route programs differ substantially from one another, most seek candidates who already know the subjects they will teach and are bright enough that they can learn a lot on the job (Darling-Hammond, Hudson, and Kirby, 1989). With such candidates, the reasoning goes, the program need only provide a relatively small portion of the teachers' knowledge--a few things that would not have been obtained in college and cannot be obtained on the job. Two common topics, for instance, are child development and classroom management strategies. Because they are interested in scaled-down programs, alternative route programs tend not to provide subject-specific methods and instead concentrate on generic pedagogical skills (Darling-Hammond, Hudson, and Kirby, 1989). Because alternative route programs are so variable, and because some of them are offered within particular school districts, they provide valuable settings for learning how instructional planning differs when it is presented in the context of a curriculum rather than generically. This paper compares the treatment of instructional planning provided by two alternative route programs. Though both programs define instructional planning as generic, one program is provided by a single school district and teaches instructional planning in the context of a particular curriculum. The other prepares teachers for a variety of school districts and presents instructional planning independent of any particular subject matter.

These two alternative route programs have been the subject of study by the National Center for Research on Teacher Education for the past four years. The first, the Los Angeles Unified School District Teacher Trainee Program, is a district-designed and operated program; the second, the New Jersey Provisional Teacher Program, is state-operated and designed. Though both were motivated largely by teacher shortages and the desire to reduce the number of emergency credentials in their jurisdictions, both also wanted to improve teacher quality. Both programs accept prior college degrees and formal examinations as indications that candidates have adequate knowledge of the subjects they will teach, both provide more contact hours than many alternative route programs, and both provide candidates with preservice as well as inservice courses, assistance from mentors, and formative evaluations.

The paper has three parts. In the first, I describe the instructional goals of a small sample of alternative route candidates before they begin their formal preparation, to see what they already know about instructional planning on the basis of their subject matter knowledge alone. In the second, I describe the overall structure and curriculum of the two programs, and in the third, I describe the particular sessions within these programs which had to do with instructional planning. Two of these sessions were observed by NCRTE

researchers in Los Angeles; the other two were observed in a New Jersey regional training center.

Entering Candidates' Instructional Goals

Instructional planning is important not only because it stands at the heart of teaching, but also because it is one of the most difficult tasks of teaching. Teachers need to have long-range as well as short-term plans, and must be aware of how their short-term goals contribute to longer-term goals. Further, since the outcome of their endeavors is highly unpredictable (Floden and Clark, 1988), they must hold these plans in a rather loose form, adapting to changing circumstances while still keeping their eyes on their goals. Good planning requires teachers to understand their own long- and short-term goals well enough to know, when things go wrong, what kinds of alternatives they would be willing to settle for. It also requires teachers to recognize and be able to capitalize on unanticipated opportunities when they arise. In short, it depends on a strong sense of direction.

One of the NCRTE interview questions asks candidates about the directions they would pursue in the grade levels or courses they would be teaching. In it, we first allowed candidates to define the subject and grade level they would teach and then asked:

> Suppose that, early in the fall, the principal of your school meets with each teacher to discuss the teacher's goals for their students. When you meet with the principal, what would you say in describing the most important things you would be trying to accomplish with your pupils?

The purpose of this question is to roughly gauge these candidates' sense of direction before they participate in their alternative route program. These candidates have satisfied their program's criteria for subject matter knowledge and have not yet been taught anything about instructional planning. Most people assume teachers develop their sense of direction from their own knowledge of the subject they are teaching. Or, in absence of that, from the district curriculum. Knowledge of the subject is a better guide than the curriculum is, however, for most curricula are purposely sketchy. They list topics to be covered or behavioral objectives to be met, but provide little rationale for teaching these things.

To develop a sense of direction that permits flexible and adaptable instruction, teachers must start with a sense of what is important about the subjects they teach. We might expect candidates who have this understanding to respond to our question by defining what is valuable about the subject and then deriving a goal that would be appropriate for the grade level or course being taught. In the absence of such understanding, we might expect candidates to defer to district curricula and formulate a goal of moving students through the content designated to their particular grade or course. This second approach, however, can substantially limit the teacher's flexibility, for in the absence of a

subject-driven purpose, teachers may teach topics simply because they are there, not because they have any perceived purpose. If things go wrong, or there are too many topics to deal with, teachers may have no way of devising a fallback strategy. Yet a third approach to our question would be to ignore content altogether and instead define an affective goal such as making school pleasurable, increasing students' affection for the subject, or increasing their affection for learning in general.

Eight elementary teaching candidates in New Jersey and five secondary English teaching candidates in Los Angeles were asked this question. Only 3 of these 13 respondents suggested that their subject might have some inherent value of its own. Of these three, one--an elementary teacher--did not actually state the value of any subject but did say, "I try to come across on each subject I talk about like math or religion or spelling, how it plays a role in our lives." The other two candidates, both secondary English teacher candidates in Los Angeles, did mention the value of their subjects. One said, "I would hope that the students would be able to come out of my class with a clear understanding of what a paragraph is, what an essay is, and the components of it, and the importance of writing as a means of communicating their feelings and ideas." The other discussed this question at length, mentioning along the way such goals as "learning more about language," learning "that great writing just doesn't come on the first draft," and having students "hear language more, not just their peers' language." Summing up, he said, "You have to show them that writing is communication, and writing is a very good form of communication. It's also a very good way of sorting out your thoughts."

A few more candidates mentioned affective goals: making either learning in general or the subject in particular enjoyable to students. For instance, Dorothy said, "Regardless of what we're learning, I want these kids to feel like it's fun to learn."

The majority of respondents drew on the school's curriculum to develop their goals. These candidates did not mention any inherent value of their subject for their students, but instead defined their goals in terms of the required curriculum. Illustrating this approach from an elementary school perspective is Deborah,[2] who established a goal of "Preparing them for reading. To get them into the pre-primaries and then into the primers and ready them for second grade level." At the secondary level, this approach to goals is illustrated by Clark, who said,

> At ninth grade they are one step away from senior high school where they are going to be called upon to utilize what they have learned for one reason or another to graduate, to get a better job, and go to college, these types of things, so the seventh grade I would see trying to teach the methodology

[2]All respondent names are pseudonyms.

perhaps and in the ninth grade trying to work a little bit more on the polished product as it were.

Candidates in these alternative route programs have demonstrated subject matter knowledge both through their college degrees and by passing formal examinations. All of them presumably knew their subjects. Yet only a few actually stated anything about their subjects that might be important for students to learn. This should not be surprising, for they have not thought about their subject as teachers, but only as learners. Most people learn and use knowledge without thinking about the knowledge per se. The unique task facing the teacher is to examine subject matter for its value to particular students. In order to plan, teachers must be explicit about knowledge and its value. That these candidates did not define goals based on the inherent value of their subject illustrates the difficulty of instructional planning for novices. That most teacher candidates have not thought much about this difficult issue is one reason why all teacher education programs, including alternative routes, spend time on instructional planning. Now let us look at the efforts of these two particular programs.

The Two Programs

The Los Angeles Unified School District Teacher Trainee Program was developed in response to permissive state legislation passed in 1983. It accounts for 96 percent of all alternatively certified teachers in California (California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, 1987). The program first offers a concentrated block of formal instruction before the school year begins. Following this block, candidates are assigned their own classrooms, where they work full time and accept full teaching responsibility. Throughout the school year, however, they continue to take formal instruction in the evenings or on weekends and have the benefit of a mentor teacher who can offer informal guidance as needed (Los Angeles Unified School District, n.d.). Principals are responsible for evaluating candidates at regular intervals and these early evaluations are expected to be formative, rather than summative. Eventually, however, they are expected to do summative evaluations and to recommend, or not recommend, the candidate for certification.

Inaugurated in September 1984 by the New Jersey State Board of Education, the New Jersey Provisional Teacher Program is offered through a series of regional training centers. Like California, New Jersey requires candidates to hold a bachelor's degree with a major in an appropriate field and to achieve an acceptable score on the National Teachers Exam in the appropriate field. It also requires that the candidate have been offered a job in a New Jersey school district, for the district must accept a share of the responsibility for preparing the candidate.

Like Los Angeles, New Jersey also starts with a concentrated block of instruction before the candidate begins teaching, and offers continued instruction evenings and weekends throughout the school year. Districts may provide their own formal instruction, but most take advantage of the regional training centers whose programs are coordinated by the state. Districts must agree to provide on-site training, supervision and evaluation, including assurances that, for the first 20 days, the candidate will share a classroom with an experienced teacher and gradually assume more and more of the teaching responsibilities for that classroom. During the remainder of the year, the candidate is responsible for his or her own classroom but continues to benefit from a supervising team, which includes a mentor teacher, and from formal instruction in the evenings.

While these two programs are similar in several respects, they differ in some important details. First, New Jersey candidates do not move directly from summer instruction into full-time teaching, as the Los Angeles candidates do. Instead, they have the benefit of 20 days working with another teacher who gradually increases the candidate's teaching responsibilities. Second, the total amount of formal instruction in New Jersey consists of 200 hours, whereas in Los Angeles it is 288 hours. Finally, these hours are spread over a one-year period in New Jersey and a two-year period in Los Angeles; that is, New Jersey principals must make their recommendations for certification at the end of one year, while Los Angeles principals make their recommendation at the end of two years.

Both programs, at least on paper, concentrate their formal instruction on generic, rather than subject-specific, pedagogy. The Los Angeles Teacher Trainee program is organized into semester-long courses, with titles similar to undergraduate teacher-education course titles. Table 1 summarizes the formal curriculum. The topic of instructional planning is located in the initial block of instruction inside the unit on learning.

Even though the Los Angeles program defines instructional planning as a generic activity, candidates actually receive curriculum-specific guidance. This occurs for two reasons. One is that formal instruction is provided by classroom teachers who teach the same subjects that the candidates will teach; that is, candidates who will teach mathematics receive their instruction from mathematics teachers and candidates who will teach English receive their formal instruction from English teachers. Second, unlike most programs, which prepare teachers to teach in a variety of locations, this program is offered in the context of a single school district. Consequently, it attends heavily to the district's own policies and guidelines, including curriculum guidelines. To simplify my presentation below, I limit my examination of instructional planning in Los Angeles to sessions provided by secondary English teachers.

The New Jersey program, on the other hand, starts with the assumption that its candidates need knowledge that is generic across both subjects and grade levels. Teacher candidates meet in regional training centers for their formal instruction and a given group

Table 1

Schedule of Teacher Trainee Classes in the Metropolitan School District

Yearly Schedule	Clock Hours	Course Titles
Summer	16	Orientation to the District
Ten Days	16	How Learning Occurs
	16	Curriculum Development and Instructional Materials
	16	Instructional Techniques
Fall Semester	16	Reading Instruction in the Content Fields
Three Hours Per Week	16	Quality Skill Building
	16	Practice in Teaching Skills
Spring Semester	16	Classroom Management in an Urban Setting
Three Hours Per Week	16	Bilingual, ESL and Other Language Development
	16	Assessing, Diagnosing and Reporting Achievements
Summer	32	Multicultural Education: General
Five Days		
Fall Semester	16	How Learning Occurs
Three Hours Per Week	16	Working with Aides, Parents and Community Members
	16	Practice in Teaching Skills
Spring Semester	32	Multicultural Education: Specific
	16	Practice in Teaching Skills

Source: State of California, Commission on Teacher Credentialing. (1987) *The effectiveness of the teacher trainee program: An alternative route into teaching in California* (A report to the California State Legislature). Sacramento: Author, p. 62.

may include candidates from a variety of grades or subjects. The content for the New Jersey alternative route program was defined by a panel of education experts. In their discussion of the rationale for the New Jersey program, Cooperman and Klagholtz (1985) cite the panel's view that the curriculum should be generic "since all beginning teachers need certain knowledge, regardless of their specialties" (p. 695). The *New Jersey Provisional Teacher Handbook for State-Approved District Training and Supervision Programs* (State of New Jersey, 1988), closely follows the guidance of that panel, defining three general areas for formal instruction: curriculum, student development and learning, and the classroom and the school. The topic of interest to us in this paper, instructional planning, is not included in the curriculum area, but instead in the third general area, the classroom and the school, in which the handbook states that candidates should be taught "topics such as . . . the making of teaching decisions, allocation of instructional time, setting of priorities, . . . setting of goals, . . . "(Appendix E).

By assuming that candidates already know the material they will teach, both programs also implicitly assume that candidates understand why that material will actually be taught. Neither program aims to explicate the value of school subjects in general, nor to explicate their value for any particular age or group of students. In Los Angeles, instructional planning means following the district's curriculum guidelines and in New Jersey, it means following a set of generic processes. Below, I describe the lessons candidates actually received in each of these programs.

Guidance in Instructional Planning

The examples described below, two from Los Angeles and two from New Jersey, all purport to teach candidates about instructional planning, yet they represent remarkably different approaches to this task. The first two sessions were observed in Los Angeles, where planning is taught by English teachers to English teacher candidates. The first Los Angeles teacher we observe is the only one of the four who portrays instructional planning as a matter of choosing instructional goals--of judging classroom activities for their value, of creatively combining instructional goals to maximize the value of classroom time. The second teacher portrays instructional planning as a matter of arranging required subject matter into the available calendar spaces. Both of these sessions occurred in the summer, before candidates began teaching.

Instructional Planning as Weighing Alternative Goals

The first session presented instructional planning as a highly judgmental task, in which considerations of the value of particular content and the reasons for learning it are uppermost in the teacher's thinking. This English teacher defined her goal as developing "literature-based instruction" and "integrated, interrelated lessons," where *integration* was

defined as intentionally blending all the language arts into each instructional unit, rather than providing one unit on literature, one on speaking, one on writing and so forth. To illustrate this type of instruction, she walked the candidates through an instructional unit that orchestrated all of these elements around a short story. As the instructor moved through this unit, she pointed out to the candidates the variety of instructional goals she was working on: The story was read aloud in a way that enhanced reading skills, the class discussion was designed to enhance communication skills; students also adopted the role of one of the characters and wrote a letter to another of the characters; the letter would include an autobiographical incident, one of the eight kinds of writing the district expects students to learn; it would require students to write about dialogue, and so offered an opportunity to teach students how to punctuate dialogue; and so forth.

As the instructor walked candidates through this unit, candidates examined the unit from a variety of perspectives. They tried it out so that they could see how much actual time was required to go through various activities and could see what the unit would look like from the student's point of view. They examined the work in light of district curriculum guidelines, considering how each activity contributed to one or more required instructional goals. They examined it from the teacher's point of view, and saw how the activities complemented one another.

The details of this unit also enabled the instructor to show candidates how to accommodate numerous constraints. She talked about ways to accommodate differences in students' reading skills. She talked about the probable vocabulary and grammatical skills of the class as a whole. She managed to mention the district's required five-step planning guides, curriculum guides, and required student tests. Finally, she brought up timing regularly, reminding candidates how much time had elapsed as they completed a particular classroom activity and how many class days would have elapsed by the time they reached a particular point.

The instructor repeatedly emphasized the importance of pursuing multiple goals--in this case, narrative writing, punctuation of dialogue, vocabulary, understanding of literature--within each instructional unit. And she discussed the merits of each activity relative to other possible activities. With respect to student reading abilities, for instance, she pointed out that, on one hand, you want good readers reading so that poorer readers will have good models of how the narrative sounds when it spoken. On the other, you want poor readers to have a chance to read.

One solution she proposed was to have students adopt various parts in the story, and read it as a play. This way, all students can participate, but the teacher can assign burdensome parts, such as the narrator, to a good reader, and other, less strenuous parts to others, so that the overall pattern maximally benefits all students. Similarly, when she discussed class discussions of the story, she went through a range of issues that could be

pursued with this story, which of these would be fruitful for students, and which would engage them. Even in a digression on journal writing, this instructor maintained her focus on the value of the work for students. She justified journal writing assignments in a variety of ways:

> Journal writing is one way for students to develop spontaneity in writing and also to prepare them for the lesson that will go forth that day.
>
> It's so hard to write about something you don't know about. [Journal writing enables them] to bring their experiences to the situation so that they do have something to say.
>
> I like to think about journal writing as a nonthreatening, share-with-me, you-don't-have-to-worry-about-punctuation or whatever, just put your ideas on paper for me.
>
> Very often the journals will become the springboard for writing later.

For this instructor, then, instructional planning was an exercise in judgment, one that involved weighing the merits of alternative instructional *goals*, as well as the merits of alternative strategies for achieving those goals. The primary task of planning was deciding what was most worthwhile to pursue. This version of instructional planning could not be taught without consideration of the subject matter, for this version of instructional planning necessarily involves choosing what is most important to do.

Instructional Planning as Fitting Content into Spaces

The second session, also observed in Los Angeles, presented instructional planning not as a matter of choosing what is important to pursue, but rather as a matter of scheduling an already-existing body of content into the available calendar. This instructor portrayed subject matter not as something to be examined for its merits, but rather as something that had already been defined and now must be delivered. In this portrayal, decisions about what is important have already been made by the school district, and the teacher need only find a way to get through it.

Early in the session, the instructor defined "core literature" by saying, "by the end of 10th grade we want every student to have read these two novels, this play, uh, these 5 short stories, and these 10 poems." She did not mention what the particular pieces actually are, nor did she discuss what instructional purposes might be served by teaching any particular pieces. Instead, she pointed out that these pieces do not exist in any single anthology, and entered into a lengthy discussion of where to find copies of them. Here is her portrayal of instructional planning:

> Let's say that we were going to teach seventh-grade English. I would take a look at the course outline, I would see which units need to be taught, I'm going to have to talk to my department chairperson to find out what materials are available so that I would know, and then I may begin to look at the calendar. . . . When I begin to plan a semester I will go through and do this because it's important for me to get a fix on when the holidays come, and the vacation times are, just so that I can begin to block out generally. . . . I would take a look at the instructional units that need to be taught. I would look at the suggested hours in the course outline.

Notice that her presentation made no mention of judging the value of any particular content, nor of trying to maximize the benefits of units by working on multiple, complementary goals. Instead, she presented a jig-saw puzzle version of planning, where the task is fitting all the pieces of content into the available time slots. Though her emphasis was quite different from that of her colleague, described above, this English teacher also offered several helpful suggestions along the way: She pointed out the importance of placing longer units into uninterrupted periods of the term; of checking with other teachers to see when they planned to be using particular anthologies, since most schools don't have enough copies of any particular novel or anthology that all teachers can use at the same time; of checking with other teachers to learn about field trips or other special activities that could interfere with your plans; of having major assignments due well before report-card time, so that all students will be able to complete them; of considering fall and spring semesters separately, since some students will change courses between semesters. She reminded eighth-grade teachers that they would also need to prepare students for a California Assessment Program, in which students would be required to write essays that will be scored.

Both of these Los Angeles English teachers also provided a handy mnemonic to help candidates think about the structure of instructional units in English. They suggested that the teacher's role is to help students find ways *into* literature, ways *through* literature, and ways *beyond* literature. This little phrase was used to encourage candidates to design their units so that they (a) set the stage for the piece that would be read and enticed students to read it, (b) provided opportunities for in-class reading, discussion or vocabulary exercises that would help students get through the piece, and (c) gave assignments that would enable students to extend the ideas beyond the piece itself. The second teacher built extensively on this phrase, offering numerous examples of techniques for giving students ways into, through and beyond literature. She made a point of rejecting teachers whom she calls "assignators," people who merely tell students what to do. Instead, she says, "We help students work through, we are going along, we're like hand in hand and we're going along with the students to lead them through the work that we're asking them to do."

But although this second English teacher offered guidance about sequencing and scheduling units and about designing them through the mnemonic, she offered no assistance on how to select or orchestrate instructional goals--no guidance on why any particular material should be taught. Instead, she merely pointed out that it is important to decide this:

> To determine the final outcome of the units from study, plan the time with assignments. What do you want the students to be able to do as a result of having spent five weeks studying a particular unit? . . . What is it that you want them to be able to understand? Is there a final assignment that you want them, in a paper, for example, to be able to sum everything up? Do you want them to have a final project that will be able to allow them to share their ideas with everyone as a result of studying a particular unit?

This admonition was followed by others that represent a more generic approach to planning. For instance, she suggested that, once candidates had determined their goal, they then needed to think about the skills students would need in order to achieve that goal and what the teacher would need to teach so that students would be able to accomplish their task. Next teachers would need to select the necessary readings and identify the necessary enabling skills. For this English teacher, then, instructional planning consists mainly of moving through required curriculum material, designing individuals units so that students can move into, through, and beyond the material. When judgement is required, it has mainly to do with cleverly meshing the material into the available time slots and texts, not with thinking about why students should study it or how they could benefit from it.

Instructional Planning as Packaging Content

The second two sessions were observed in New Jersey, where instructional planning is taught independent of any particular content. Both of these sessions occurred in the fall, after the candidates were teaching, and both instructors were independent consultants, hired specifically to teach these courses. The first instructor portrayed instructional planning as a matter of packaging material for presentation to students; the second as a series of steps through which the teacher move.

The first of these sessions occurred on a Saturday morning in early December. In a pre-observation interview, the instructor described her goal for the day as follows: "that the student will deliver a lesson in a well organized sequence including the necessary parts of the lesson." The session began with teacher candidates presenting real lessons to their classmates, lessons they had already used in their own classrooms or that they intended to use. Their peers--other teacher candidates--played the role of students. Following each of these mini-lessons, the candidates and their instructor examined the focal candidate's lesson

against a set of criteria listed on a handout. The handout reflected a generic view of instructional planning, in that it did not address the content of the lesson, but rather how the content was packaged for instruction. Its criteria were as follows:

- **Standards** (Were materials ready, did students know how to behave, etc.?)
- **Anticipatory set** (Were students told what they were to learn, how it related to prior lessons, why it was important?)
- **Teaching** (Did students receive an adequate explanation of material before putting it into practice?)
- **Practice** (Did students practice what they were taught, did teacher monitor and reteach when necessary?)
- **Closure** (Did teacher close the class by having the students identify what the session's learning was?)
- **Follow-up** (Did teacher assign homework based on the day's learning?)
- **Motivation** (Did the teacher maintain a friendly atmosphere, give students knowledge of their results, allow students moments of success, grant rewards, add notes of interest, or increase or decrease anxiety?)

The first candidate we observed offered a lesson on writing. Three other candidates served as third-grade students for this lesson. The focal candidate began by reviewing the parts of a paragraph. On the board, she listed "Parts of a paragraph: (1) beginning sentence; (2) middle sentences; (3) ending sentence." She then led her "students" through this discussion:

T: Each paragraph should have a topic. What should the beginning sentence tell us?

Ss: The beginning sentence should tell us the main idea.

T: Anything else?

Ss: It should be interesting.

T: Good. What should the middle sentences tell us?

Ss: They should tell us more about the main idea.

T: What about the ending sentence?

Ss: It should restate the main idea.

After this orientation to paragraphs, the candidate read a paragraph about the wind to her students and asked them to outline it. She then led them through a series of steps designed to help them write their own paragraph about the wind. On the board, she listed three topics about wind: "(1) kinds of wind; (2) Sounds made by wind; (3) Other words for wind." Then she and the students brainstormed, naming all the words they could think of in each of these three topic areas. When they were finished, the students wrote their own paragraphs about the wind.

When the teaching candidate finished her mini-lesson, the instructor led the candidates through an analysis of the lesson, organizing the discussion around the criteria listed on her handout. She began by asking the class how the candidate had done on "anticipatory set," and students responded by mentioning the candidate's use of the board and her focused questions. After three or four comments were made, the instructor moved on, saying, "Now let's go to the teaching segment. Any comments?" Students mentioned modeling, physical involvement, use of voice, use of example, use of the board, and use of student responses to move the lesson along. Then the instructor moved to the next criterion for evaluating the lesson.

Most of the student comments consisted of identifying aspects of the mini-lesson that served as examples of criteria listed on the handout; that is, they did not seriously question any features of the lesson, nor did they comment on the relative merits of particular choices that were made. Only twice did candidates suggest alternative strategies, and in both cases the instructor rejected the alternative, saying the focal candidate had made judgments based on her knowledge of her students.

Two aspects of this session are particularly relevant to the problem of helping teachers develop a sense of instructional direction. First, the lesson was examined as a freestanding unit, rather than as part of a larger cloth. Unlike the Los Angeles teachers, who portrayed instructional planning as involving semesters and units, this instructor portrayed it as happening one day at a time.

Second, the criteria for evaluating lessons did not include the substantive merits of the lesson. This is not to say that the instructor did not care about substantive merit; only that she did not mention it to these candidates or include it on her list of criteria, since she was concentrating on generic criteria. Yet this portrayal of instructional planning conveys the impression that substantive issues are not a part of instructional planning. And

candidates followed their instructor's lead when they commented on the lesson, staying close to the criteria listed on the handout.

This is not to say there was nothing to be said about the content of this lesson. Had this lesson been examined in the Los Angeles program, at least three points would probably have been said about its content. One point is that the candidate did not mention what paragraphs are for, how they can be used in larger pieces of writing, or why anyone might want to use them. Instead, she presented paragraphs as if they existed apart from any larger writing task. They merely existed; therefore students should learn to make them.

Second, with respect to the three parts of the paragraph, the candidate permitted students to define them in virtually the same way: Beginning sentences tell the main idea; middle sentences tell more about the main idea; and ending sentences restate the main idea. And finally, after defining paragraphs according to these three parts, the candidate presented an outline for a paragraph on wind (kind of wind; sounds of wind, other words for wind) and never showed her students whether or how these three topics about wind related to the three parts of a paragraph defined earlier. Since students received no messages about what paragraphs are for, and since they received two portraits of paragraphs, one emphasizing three parts that relate to a single main idea and another emphasizing three parts that cover different topics, it is not clear what they really learned about paragraphs. Had our first English teacher from Los Angeles been present, she would probably have raised these issues and offered some reasons why third graders might benefit from understanding paragraphs, some examples of what they should understand about paragraphs, and some tips on how to help students learn to develop paragraphs in ways that would not confuse them.

On only one occasion did a question about subject matter arise, and it was dealt with rather quickly:

> S1: She combined science and writing.
>
> S2: I disagree. It was just a creative writing lesson--only descriptive.
>
> T: It was a combination of science and writing. [The candidate] linked with yesterday's homework assignment on with wind. She also stated: "Today we're going to use what we know about paragraph writing."

This instructor, then, portrayed instructional planning as a matter of packaging and presenting each day's piece of subject matter. Since her task was to teach candidates how to package each day's content, she did not address the problem of evaluating the merits of either content or goals, as the first Los Angeles teacher did, nor did she address

longer-term planning issues such as scheduling material over whole semesters or school years, as the second Los Angeles teacher did.

Planning as a Generic Process

In the fourth session, also observed in New Jersey, instructional planning was portrayed as a process that, like the criteria of the third session, existed independent of subject matter. This session was a four-hour evening session which followed a full day of teaching. Before beginning his lesson, the instructor wrote on the board, "Planning: long, unit, short-term/weekly/daily." He began his discussion by advising students to get, from their district supervisors, any available curriculum guidelines since, he admonished, their teaching would be monitored.

This instructor portrayed instructional planning as a set of steps one goes through regardless of the content being taught. He offered numerous admonitions, similar to those offered by the second English teacher in Los Angeles, without providing guidance on how to accomplish any of his recommendations or what kind of considerations should guide one during each step. Here is a collection of admonitions from his lecture.

> As far as your daily planning goes, ask yourself: "What is it I'm trying to teach primarily?" Define your objective. For example, the role of Tubman in the Abolitionist movement. . . . Keep in mind the school's prescriptions.
>
> Then determine your supporting objectives--at most two or three.
> Next plan on an attention-getting device. This is important. You want your students to be focused right at the beginning of the lesson and/or the start of the day. . . . The important thing is control. The teaching of content follows.
>
> Once you have their attention, introduce your topic and plan your strategies to reach the objective.
>
> Plan for variety. Students get bored with static teaching strategies.
>
> Plan for reinforcement of concepts and skills during a lesson and before ending a lesson, let students tell you what it is that they have learned.
>
> Try to include parents in your plan. Communicate that you would like them to ask students about what they did or learned in school that day.

Though his opening orientation distinguished three levels of planning (long, unit, and short-term or daily), the bulk of his lecture dealt with daily planning. At the close of the session, he summarized by listing factors to consider in daily planning: goals, specific

objectives, attention-getting devices, alternative activities and teaching strategies, reinforcement, review, and communication with parents.

Like his New Jersey colleague who focused on the criteria for evaluating a daily lesson, this instructor did not include decisions about choice of subject matter as part of instructional planning. In fact, when candidates raised substantive questions about what should be taught or how to respond to unanticipated student outcomes, he seemed unwilling to respond. For instance, one candidate asked about teaching to the test, and in so doing sparked a series of comments from other candidates about over-inclusive district curriculum policies which made it difficult for teachers to teach any content in depth. Had this issue been raised in one of the secondary English sessions we observed in Los Angeles, the instructor might have discussed ways of combining goals or of identifying the most important goals. Instead, this instructor discarded the issue as one involving teacher empowerment and then set the issue aside saying, "Lets get back to the different types of planning." Similarly, when another candidate mentioned a problem of students mastering material more quickly or more slowly than had been anticipated, this instructor said, "Now that you are aware of Murphy's law, perhaps you might plan alternative activities for students and/or reassess and rethink the curriculum." He provided no guidance, however, on how to reassess or rethinking a curriculum--what to examine or what criteria to use.

Discussion

Though neither of these programs is designed to promote further understanding of subject matter, the Los Angeles program gives more attention to subject matter in instructional planning than does New Jersey. However, even in Los Angeles, the goal is not to help teachers understand better the inherent value of the subject they will teach, but instead to understand better district policies. Los Angeles candidates are introduced to district testing requirements, district guidelines for instruction in English (Los Angeles Unified School District, 1985), model curriculum standards in English (California State Board of Education, 1985), and the state's Language Arts Framework (California State Board of Education, 1987). All of these guidelines are expected to influence teachers' instructional planning.

The New Jersey program functions in a different context than the Los Angeles program. Like traditional preservice teacher education programs, it prepares teachers for a variety of districts and curricula. Although its independence from district-specific policies frees New Jersey faculty to address broader issues, it also denies them a particular substantive context. Without such a context, decisions about what subject matter might be important or why, about the relative merits of alternative instructional goals, or about how to arrange material across an entire term or year, cannot be addressed.

Yet, even in Los Angeles, where instructional planning is a highly curriculum-dependent enterprise, many important decisions about instructional goals have already been made by the district or by the state. Though one teacher in Los Angeles attended to the judgmental aspect of instructional planning, neither program, at least on paper, offers candidates an opportunity to consider the merits of teaching particular ideas to their students; neither provides candidates an opportunity to examine the value of their subject as a whole, nor do they help give any hints as to how candidates might establish some set of criteria on their own for evaluating content. In the absence of such understanding, candidates can wind up teaching paragraphs without regard to their role in composition.

Yet, as we have seen, these candidates did not express clear ideas about why their subjects were important, nor of how to identify those aspects of their subjects that were most important. Moreover, neither these candidates, nor their programs, are unusual among teaching candidates in alternative routes. In their survey of 64 alternative route programs, Darling-Hammond, Hudson, and Kirby (1989) found that most alternative route programs are designed as these two programs were: They assume candidates enter with adequate subject matter knowledge and strive to provide course work only in the areas most clearly missing from their education backgrounds. They also found, however, that candidates participating in these programs, when asked how their preparation could have been improved, recommended that the programs be rendered more subject-matter specific.

Though the four sessions described here occurred in the context of alternative route programs, it is important to mention that this tendency to separate judgments about content from discussions of instructional planning is not unique to alternative routes. Indeed, traditional teacher education generally occurs separate from subject matter preparation. Traditional programs typically provide subject matter through disciplinary departments and address generic teaching-related issues through education departments. The Los Angeles portrayal of instructional planning as embedded in the context of the particular curriculum is unusual, and, ironically, is only possible because the program is offered within a single school district and so can focus on a single curriculum. Most alternative routes, as well as most undergraduate teacher preparation programs, must prepare teachers for an unknown variety of school districts and curricula, and so cannot provide the substantive detail that Los Angeles teachers can.

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